

Special Education Advisory Panel

December 8, 2006

Minutes

Members Attending

Bev Woodhurst
Cathy Einhorn
Ken Southwick
Eileen Huth
Ray Wicks
Patti Simcosky

Dorothy Parks
Jerry Neal
Martha Crabtree
Melissa Frazier
Jeaneal Alexander
Theresa Valdes

Diane Francis
Trish Grassa
Pat Jackson
Joan Zavitsky
Steve Viola
Lynda Roberts

Members Not Attending

Kristen Callen
Amanda Coleman
Karen Coleman
Malinda Darter

DeAnn Fiedler
Doreen Frappier
Marnie Gustafson
Deb Hendricks

Nina Murphy
Kim Oligschlaeger
Mary Kay Savage
Shirley Woods

DESE Staff Attending

Margaret Strecker

Pam Williams

Mary Corey

Guests

Vicki Davidson (MRDD)

Copies of handouts distributed at the meeting are available at:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142meetings.html>.

Call to Order/Introductions/Approval of Minutes – Bev Woodhurst called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made. Joan Zavitsky made a motion to approve the previous minutes as written. Pat Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Comments from the Public - Vicki Davidson with the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), Department of Mental Health, indicated that MRDD is mandated by federal law to work toward systems changes. A priority of MRDD is including kids in typical class settings. Vicki indicated she co-chairs the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum for transition students. She is attending the panel meeting to keep up on what is current in education so everyone can work together.

Proposed State Regulations – Pam Williams reviewed the draft changes to the State Plan for Part B with the panel. DESE's intent is to follow federal regulations as close as possible but there is some wording included because of state statute or due to specific feedback from the field. Some changes were to correct terminology used in the State Plan while others reflect changes in the federal regulations.

Panel members made suggestions to Pam on several items in the State Plan including: the definition of private school and home school students; the definition of elementary, middle, and secondary school as it relates to certification; parent consent (referenced in Section II – should it include the word “written”); what category does CAPD fall under; why doesn't reading fluency skills fall under a basic reading skill (referenced in Section III); what provisions are there for collecting RtI data for home schooled and private school students; could the references to nondisabled students instead read as “children in general education”); and, concerns about removing the steps for retraining or hiring personnel (referenced in Section VI).

DESE will send an email to panel members when the public comment period for the State Plan begins so panel members will have sufficient time to review and comment.

Formal Recommendations (FR #9) - Margaret Strecker indicated the Division is receiving very few child compliant surveys and that staff have been discussing options for getting more surveys returned. She asked the panel what they would like to have done. Ken Southwick indicated it appears that the survey process does not inhibit anyone from replying and if people choose not to respond, DESE has done the best it can to gather the information. DESE will continue to send the surveys for one more year and bring the results to the panel periodically.

SPP/APR (Working Lunch) – Mary Corey handed out a copy of the slides for her presentation and information regarding the SPP targets from 2005-06 through 2010-11. Ken Southwick indicated concern with setting the goals in the SPP based on the AYP. He felt that as the goals continue to increase, more districts will be unable to meet AYP. It was suggested this be put on the February agenda for further discussion. Pam Williams suggested possibly having someone from the Division of School Improvement come talk with the Panel regarding NCLB.

DESE Update

- **Assistant Commissioner Vacancy** - The Division of Special Education is currently advertising for the Assistant Commissioner position.
- **Dispute Resolution and Monitoring Data** – Margaret Strecker reviewed and discussed two handouts with panel members.
- **Due Process Disclosure** – The due process disclosure was emailed to panel members prior to the December panel meeting. Margaret Strecker reviewed and discussed this information with panel members.
- **OSEP Determinations** – Pam Williams indicated that the U. S. Department of Education is required by IDEA to make determinations about each state based on the state's APR and SPP. There are four levels of determination: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention, and needs substantial intervention. States are also required to make these same determinations for school districts. DESE has to begin doing this by the Spring of 2007. Missouri has not received its determination yet.
- **Update on Incentive Grants** – Pam Williams indicated that DESE has identified 96 districts through a formula that looked at elementary achievement. A formula granting funds to each of those districts was established based on the district's enrollment. The districts offered grants have been contacted via letter and will be given the opportunity to attend training on what the grant is about and on the improvement plan process. The RPDC directors were sent letters indicating which districts received grants in their regions. RPDCs will also be given a block type grant and asked to identify districts in their regions that they feel need assistance. Those funds will then be provided to those districts through some type of application process.
- **High School Assessment Committee** – Pam Williams indicated that the Commissioner directed Stan Johnson, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of School Improvement to convene an internal group (Pam is serving on this committee) to discuss options for high school assessments and make recommendations to take to the State Board. They are looking at end of course assessments, college entrance assessments (i.e., ACT), MAP (as is or a revision to), or some combination of the above. They are looking at what other states are doing. Pam indicated that whatever is recommended must meet the regulations for a state assessment. If panel members have comments/suggestions, call or email Pam Williams.

The subcommittees met for approximately thirty minutes.

Subcommittee Reports

Evaluation – Lynda Roberts indicated at the last meeting that panel members would receive a draft copy of the bylaws but she was unable to do this due to a major family health issue. The subcommittee met briefly and noted some items in the State Plan draft discussed earlier that will require changes to be made to the by-laws. She is hoping to have a draft to the panel before the February meeting.

Rules and Regulations – Ray Wicks thanked Pam Williams for the presentation on the draft changes to the State Plan. Ray indicated to panel members that if they had any suggestions regarding the State Plan, to contact Pam.

Monitoring – Ken Southwick indicated that Margaret Strecker provided monitoring information to his subcommittee. The district focused monitorings will be a lot different than the monitorings in the past. There will be an opportunity for the panel to review the outline of the focused monitoring process showing how districts are identified, what type of review will be used, etc.

Programs – Martha Crabtree appreciated all the information provided earlier by DESE. One concern her subcommittee has, though, revolves around the use of a speech implementer and speech language therapist (how to monitor and what training). How is DESE dealing with the lack of speech implementers in the state? Pam Williams indicated there are a lot of shortages in all areas of special education. Pam also indicated that the Board of Healing Arts currently has a concern with the speech implementer program. They feel they have the statutory authority to prevent DESE from using the program. DESE is trying to come up with some options to address the situation. Martha asked that the panel be kept informed of the status.

There were questions about the special education teacher and student ratios. Pam indicated this information is discussed in the funding section of the State Plan. It is a state regulatory issue that has been in state regulations for years. As part of the changes to the State Plan, DESE staff have been discussing whether or not there need to be changes to the caseload and class size standards. A group of stakeholders were convened earlier this week, including three panel members. The group gave DESE feedback on three items: do you want to keep caseload standards in state regulations; if kept, what do they need to look like; and, is there some other option. DESE is reviewing this information. The general feeling was that something did need to be included in the State Plan but it needed to be easier.

Nominations – Joan Zavitsky reported on behalf of this subcommittee. The subcommittee has submitted to DESE their recommendations. DESE has contacted three parents and one LEA and is currently working on the appointment paper work.

Public Comment – Joan Zavitsky reported on behalf of this subcommittee. The subcommittee has reviewed data provided to them on the DESE advanced questionnaires, due process information, MPACT data, etc. They identified the following areas of unmet needs: funding, research in instruction/learning/curriculum/interventions, career education opportunities (increase number of special education students that do not have access to career education programs due to the complexity of the program), paperwork reduction and simplification, mental health needs of students, and achievement (MAP and MAP-A and issues and AYP). The subcommittee suggested that the panel vote on the unmet needs identified above to identify the top priorities, and then provide them to DESE. One other option is to recognize that DESE currently already collects sufficient public comment so is a Public Comment subcommittee really needed. Need to determine at the next panel meeting if the panel wants to continue with the subcommittee. If yes, then what are the top unmet needs that need to be focused on?

Adjournment - Ray Wicks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Eileen Huth seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.